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A method for processing structured text is provided. Tokenized text is created from structured text in accordance with a predetermined set of tokenizer rules set forth in a token pattern knowledge base (13), in which each tokenizer rule defines a simple constituent. Parsed text is created from tokenized text in accordance with a predetermined set of parser rules set forth in a parser rule knowledge base (15), in which each parser rule defines a complex constituent. Processed text is created from parsed text in accordance with a predetermined set of interpreter rules set forth in an interpretation knowledge base (17), in which each interpreter rule defines a message element corresponding to a simplex or complex constituent, whereby the processed text identifies and provides an interpretation of the message elements of the corresponding structured text for a useful purpose, such as text-to-speech synthesis.